



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
San Diego Public Library

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CONTACT: Mark-Elliott Lugo
(619) 238-6637
mlugo@sandiego.gov

**RARE CONCEPTUAL WORKS FROM THE 1970s HIGHLIGHTED IN
LYNN SCHUETTE EXHIBITION AT PACIFIC BEACH LIBRARY**

Roots of Noted San Diego-Area Painter Are Revisited in Exhibition of New and Early Works

SAN DIEGO – Nearly one hundred paintings and mixed-media works by Lynn Schuette, a nationally recognized artist and arts administrator who has played a major role in shaping San Diego's art community, are on view through January 15, 2011 in the gallery of the Pacific Beach/Taylor Branch Library. Titled "The Beauty Project & Related Works," Schuette's exhibition features a diverse array of conceptually oriented pieces from the mid-to-late 1970s that have never been seen by the general public. These are juxtaposed with related works she created this year for her current exhibition. Schuette will give an informal talk about her art on Saturday, November 20 at 1:00 p.m. in the gallery. This event and the exhibition itself are free to the public. The library is located at 4275 Cass St., one block south of Grand Ave. in Pacific Beach. Library hours are: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 12:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Thursdays and Fridays, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; and Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The library is closed Sundays and Mondays. Before and after-hours docented tours are available for large groups and schools. For more information the public can call the library at (858) 581-9934 or visit online at <http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/visualarts.shtml> .

The public perception of Schuette is most likely that of a gifted painter, skilled draftsman, and leader in arts administration. As an arts administrator, her greatest achievement was founding Sushi Performance and Visual Art in 1980. This cutting-edge gallery and performance art space, located downtown, brought San Diego (and Schuette) international recognition. In terms of her personal art making, Schuette has been acknowledged as one of the city's leading painters for more than twenty years. The artist's style is distinctive and instantly recognizable: sensuously flowing, twisting, and unabashedly beautiful forms rendered in a striking palette. Her subjects, ranging from landscapes to figuration, are wittily conceived and thoughtfully executed.

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As celebrated as Schuette is, few people know that her artistic roots, dating to the 1970s, are grounded in conceptualism. During that era, Schuette produced pieces ranging from an irreverent edition of archival prints whose images were the inked impressions of slices of rye bread (superimposed letters spelling “WRY” completed the joke), to more serious works addressing wartime atrocities and other examples of man’s inhumanity to man. At that time, surrounded for the first time in her life by a dynamic, well-educated, and diverse circle of professional artists and their friends, Schuette also created a number of works that gave voice to their opinions on various issues. “I wanted to create art that encouraged people to examine themselves and the attitudes of others,” she remembers.

For example, in 1978, Schuette was fascinated by the moral constraints (as opposed to what was strictly legal or illegal) that governed the behavior of her peers during what she describes as “a largely Christian society undergoing radical change.” Consequently she created *Considered Sin*, a six-foot high, mixed-media work resembling a wall hanging. For this piece Schuette asked 119 friends and colleagues to write down on separate desk calendar pages one thing they considered to be a sin. *Considered Sin*’s zig-zagging arrangement of calendar pages cascading down the wall makes a graphically powerful statement, but the litany of “sins” scrawled in pencil on the pages is truly engrossing reading. Other works from this period incorporated text, series of photographs, labels, baggage tags, twine, human hair, and found objects, to name a few. They were handsome and thought-provoking, but never or rarely seen outside the artist’s studio.

“The Beauty Project & Related Works,” Schuette’s second solo Visual Arts Program exhibition, is a mini-retrospective of sorts. Nineteen conceptual pieces dating from 1975 to 1979 augment more than seventy new works created specifically for this exhibition. These new works range from traditional paintings to mixed-media assemblages, and were conceived as a continuation (albeit more than thirty years later) of her early conceptual pieces. The focal point of this exhibition – and its namesake – is “The Beauty Project,” an ambitious series of sixty-four small canvases (eight by ten inches) based on a survey Schuette developed and administered to friends and colleagues earlier this year.

Each “Beauty Project” canvas is Schuette’s visual interpretation of a survey response to the phrase: “I find beauty in _____” (respondents filled in the blank). Early on, in order to maintain the integrity of the information she had amassed, Schuette made the conscious decision not to impose her personal painting style on individual responses, and, instead, let each response dictate the style of its equivalent painting. Most artists work in the opposite manner. To further maintain impartiality, Schuette attempted to conceal from herself the identities of the survey respondents, many of whom were long-time friends. Consequently the types of imagery and the ideas conveyed by these paintings are much more diverse in this exhibition than those found in conventional solo exhibitions. The installation of the “Beauty Project” paintings, a tight, grid-like formation measuring sixteen feet long and forty inches high, is not only an imposing visual statement, but also

draws attention to the group (survey) methodology of the Project and the interconnection between its participants in that they are all acquaintances of the artist. “The Beauty Project & Related Works” will be a revelation to Schuette’s admirers and a wonderful discovery for those new to her art.

NOTE TO EDITORS: High-resolution color digital images of many of the works in this exhibition are available on request from the library curator.

The San Diego Public Library’s Visual Arts Program is a nationally recognized series of exhibitions, lectures, a television program, and other art-related activities. “The Beauty Project” exhibition is the most recent of nearly 150 museum-quality contemporary art exhibitions that have been organized by the Visual Arts Program of the San Diego Public Library since 1997. The mission of the Program is to demonstrate the Library’s role as a cultural institution embracing a broad range of disciplines, while assisting San Diego’s mid-career and older professional artists in achieving wider local, regional, and national attention. Visual Arts Program exhibitions are made possible, in part, by contributions from individuals, volunteer efforts, and the Friends of Central Library. For more information about the Visual Arts Program, the public can contact the library curator at (619) 238-6627 or visit the Library’s website at www.sandiegolibrary.org

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library’s catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org

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